far more mentally matured and competent to cope with passengers' problems. The question is that compensation for this discrimination is not enough.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there any reduction in salaries and other things when they are put on ground duty? Is there any reduction in salary? Is consideration of children that she is mentioning, of one of the reasons why you are giving them ground duty at the age of 45?

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: The hon. lady Member brought up the matter of compensation. I never, used the word 'compensation'. I do not want to hide behind the technical judgement of the Supreme Court. But the fact is that the Supreme Court has said that they are two different classes. I am not talking about compensation for the women vis-a vis men, or compensation for men vis-a-vis women. They are two different actegories as far as service is concerned. That is what the Supreme Court has said. I am not hiding behind that. Time and again I am repeating the fact that it is being sympathetically discussed. But I want to set the records straight. It is very difficult hen shwe talks of compensation which we are not applying. It is very difficult to quantify exactly what an air-hostess would get if she would avail of the retirement benefits at th age of 35 which is not available t men, or whether she would avail c it at the age of 39, or 41 or 43. It i very difficult to calculate. It is a ver complex thing. In any case, we ar not treating it as compensation.. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. have called question 183 now.

Import of L. P. G.

*183. SHRI SOM PAL:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:†

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased t state:

(a) what is the price and quantity of L. P. G. imported during the las three years, year-wise; and

(b) what is the local cost break up on an average?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR) (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) During 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-91 about 241 TMT, 302 TMT and 329 TMT of L.P.G. valued at about Rs. 70 crores, Rs. 98 crores and Rs. 160 crores respectively was imported.

After landing, the following cost were incurred in connection with th imports thereof:

Rs./MT (Average)

	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91
(i) Wharfage/landing charges	20·73	38·18	58·70
(ii) Ocean loss	17·83	19·54	20.14
(iii) Demurrage	10·93	57·04	11·21
(iv) Customs duty	3086·93	3020·20	5567·82
(v) Countervailing duty	273·00	273·00	273·00
TOTAL :	3409·42	3407·96	5930·87

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Chimanbhai Mehta.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, it seems the answer is incomplete, or perhaps, the Department has not understood the question clearly. My question is, what is the import price of LPG and what is the local price i.e. of domestically produced gas? I have asked about these two different prices. They have given the import price and then the additional charges on that. Therefore, the answer itself is incomplete. I think, a half-an-hour discussion is required because with this answer, how am I to formulate my question? He has not understood my question. Another point is that it is not clear whether the figures given in the table are in lakhs or crores. For example, in the year 1988-89, the total cost comes to 3409. Is it in lakhs or crores? We are again confused. If the figures are in lakhs, if you import Rs. 70 crores worth of gas, the additional charges after landing Rs. 70 crores worth of LPG in a particular year is Rs. 3409.42 lakhs. Does it mean that the cost of the locally-produced LPG is more than the imported gas? This is also one of the questions. But the main question has not been answered. Unless that question is answered, we will not be able to discuss other things.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: The question of the hon. Member is specifically in relation to the price and the quantity of LPG imported during the last three years and the cost on an average. It was interpreted to mean the cost of the imported LPG as well as the cost incurred after its import. If the hon. Member wants the price of the domestic LPG, the information can be given to him. The cost of the domestic LPG, on an average, is about Rs. 4000 per ton as on 25-7-91. It may be seen that the cost of the imported LPG is much more, even double the cost. The question has been framed in such a way that it could not have been answered otherwise.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: This is a question relating to figures. He said that the cost of the locally produced LPG is Rs. 4000 per ton. In the statement, he says that the cost after landing comes to Rs 3409.42 crores. But he has not given the total cost of the imported gas. So, I can formulate my supplement only when the data is properly supplied. I would like to know what is the metric ton cost of the imported gas and the metric ton cost of the local gas.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: CIF value of the imported gas for the year 1991 is Rs. 4863 per metric ton on an average, whereas, if you include various other charges like wharfage and landing charges, ocean loss, demurrage, customs duty and countervailing duty, the total price comes to Rs. 10793. In addition, Rs. 1503 is to be added by way of filling and marketing costs. The price of domestic LPG is Rs. 4138 per ton. I hope the hon. Member is satisfied with this answer.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: That means, the price of indigenously-produced gas is less.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: It is one-third.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: I hope the indigenously-produced LPG price is based on the cost and that you are not losing anything on this. You may be giving subsidy in some other manner. The point is if you can produce LPG at such a low cost, compared to international CIF value—this point is very important and relevant—why do you charge almost double the price for the gas supplied to the industrial consumers, compared to international prices? In U.S.A., it is 1200 rupees for one thousand cubic metre. In U.S.S.R. also it is almost the same. In Thailand and Indonesia also, the price is much cheaper compared to ours. If you can produce at a low cost this may be because of the cheap labour—why do you charge more from the industrial consumers? The burden ultimately, will fall on

the consumers. Why is there this disparity?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, I beg to submit that the hon. Member's question is multiple one. LPG is only a fraction of the gas which is produced in the country. It is a combination of Propane and Butane fractions. It is liquified petroleum gas and used for domestic and industrial consumption.

As far as the gas supplied for domestic consumption is concerned, there is a subsidy of about Rs. 60 on every cylinder of LPG which is supplied to the domestic consumers. It is a subsidised price.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Is it a subsidised price? This is what I am asking. Are you confusing me, or am I getting confused?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: The imported and the indigenously-produced LPG is pooled together, it is bottled in our bottling plants and then a common price is fixed. This price is subsidised to the extent of Rs. 60 per cylinder. We are spending about Rs. 780 crores by way of subsidy in regard to the LPG supplied to the domestic consumers.

The hon. Member has put a question in regard to the price of industrial gas. That is a different story. It is a composite gas given through pipelines. As far as the price of this gas supplied to industrial consumers is concerned, the hon. Member's presumption is not right. We have figures to show that the price that is charge in India is much less than that charged in some other countries. There may be some countries where the price is less. The price is to be determined on the basis of the Kelkar Committee's recommendations. The final price revision is still under consideration.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Can you give me the prices in other countries so that I can compare? Sir, this is what I have been demanding for the last three Sessions. I have been asking questions on this line. You say 'global formula', 'marginal price fixation',....

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are asking about the prices in other countries. How can it arise as a supplementary to the main question?

(*Interruptions*).

It does not arise out of the main question.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Sir, the hon. Minister has said that the price charged is less compared to international standards. Then, he elaborated in a different manner. It is on record. But my question is, what are the prices in other countries?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your supplementary does not arise out of the main question. To some other question, he might have replied something. How can you bring that here?

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: The data in regard to prices in other countries is not available. He can give it in writing afterwards. It does not matter.

SHRI SOM PAL: Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to know whether it is a fact that LPG is supposed to be the cheapest kitchen fuel in India as compared to coal, wood and other fuel used and still you are subsidising it to the extent of Rs. 60 per cylinder. My question is whether there is a proposal to withdraw the subsidy as you are doing in all other cases.

Secondly, what is the basis of giving this subsidy to the manufacturers? Is this subsidy being given on the initial manufacture of cylinder or even on refueling?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: I will start from the last part of the supplementary. The question of cylinder manufacturing is a separate issue altogether and the gas is a separate issue. Together they form the LPG cylinder. Historically, ever since the LPG distribution began in this country and now it is enlarged to almost 10 per cent of the households of this country, there has been a subsidy. You

cannot say that LPG consumption is elitist or anything like that. There has been a subsidy and that subsidy for reasons, like socio-economic reasons, Government have decided to continue. There is no proposal at the moment to do away with the subsidy.

SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: I understand the reply of the Minister about subsidy. I would like to know, what is the cost price of the gas and what is the cess of ONGC or the oil company for one thousand cubic metres of gas? How do you calculate the price and how have you come to the conclusion that it is Rs. 127.70 per cylinder which is of 15 kg. only? What is your cess and what is the duty?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the cost is calculated on the basis or the cost to the individual gas producing company, taking into consideration the cost of the cylinder, cost of the gas, various other elements involved in transportation, bottling charges and so on. That comes to about Rs. 120 on an average. What is charged is around Rs. 60 to 70 depending on various sites where it is distributed. The average subsidy is Rs. 60.

SHRI VITHALBHAI M. PATEL: Can you give a break-up if there is any cess? Can you lay it on the Table of the House?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: I will do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can put the break-up on the Table of the House. Yes, Mr. Sivaji.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Sir, as per the figure given by the hon. Minister, the subsidy is to the tune of Rs. 4200 per tonne, whereas the duties, both customs and countervailing, come to Rs. 5840. Is it a fact that the Government is ploughing back the entire amount of subsidy in the form of customs and countervailing duties on gas, both imported as well as indigenous?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Could you repeat your question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please repeat your question. You come nearer.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Sir, as per the figures of the hon. Minister the subsidy is to the tune of Rs. 4200 per ton whereas the duties, both customs and countervailing, amount to Rs. 5840. Is it a fact that the Government is ploughing back the entire amount of subsidy and getting much more than what is offered by way of subsidy in other forms by levying customs and countervailing duties both on imported as well as indigenous gas that is available in this country?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the most substantial portion of more than Rs. 10,000 of the cost of imported LPG is around Rs. 5,600 which is customs duty. It is applicable only to the imported LPG; it is not applicable to the indigenous LPG. The break-up of the Rs. 60—subsidy is Rs. 24 on the basic price, Rs. 17 on excise and customs duties and Rs. 19 on freight, delivery charges and distributor's commission. These elements are not passed on to the consumer and it is adjusted by the distributing company.

श्री राम नरेश यादव: माननीय सभापति जी, जो उत्तर दिया है उसके आधार पर 88–89 में 70 करोड़ रुपये, 89–90 में 98 करोड़ रुपये और 90–91 में 160 करोड़ रुपये का आयात किया जा रहा है। इसका मतलब यह है कि इतनी विदेशी मुद्रा हम दे रहे हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि जब आवश्यकता बढ़ रही है और हमारे यहां उसकी कमी है तो इस कमी को ध्यान में रखते हुए सरकार की तरफ से कोई ऐसी योजना लागू करने के बारे में विचार कर रही है कि कैसे इस कमी को पूरा करेंगे विशेषकर आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में। कहां तक इस कमी को पूरा करने में सरकार सक्षम हो सकेगी यह मैं जानना चाहता हूं।

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, LPG is produced in our refiner-

ies and in, what are known as, fractionators along the gas pipeline system. There is a development plan for increasing the refining capacity as well as the fractionator capacity in the Eighth Plan. So, only according to that development plan, depending on the outlays which we are able to muster, can the indigenous production of LPG be increased. As regards imported LPG, we have the omnipresent problem of foreign exchange and also we have a problem in the infrastructure of our ports. We need special pipelines, special pressure spheres, etc.,—because this is gas under pressure—vapourizers and other infrastructural requirements in our ports. There is a development plan in some of our ports for enabling us to import more LPG. Because of the constraints in indigenous production as well as imports, we can develop the availability of LPG only in a phased manner. This year our availability is 2,417 thousand metric tonnes which is going to be increased, gradually, to 4,000 thousand metric tonnes next year. This year we are going to give five lakh new LPG connections, 10 lakh connections in the each of next two years and, from 1994-95, when our capacity increases in all these areas, then we will be able to give 40 lakh connections every year.

Increase in the Fares of Air India

*184. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 87 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 15th July, 1991 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to increase the fares of Air India in the near future; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI M. O. H. FAROOK): (a) and (b) The matter is still under the consideration of the Government.

श्री प्रमोद महाजन : सभापति जी, एयर इंडिया का महाराजा महाराज के कब्जे में आ गया है । एयर इंडिया का बोध चिह्न सूर्य का भी अस्त हो रहा है और फिर से अश्व पुरुष जागृत हो रहा है । ऐसी स्थिति में लाखों एयर इंडिया के यात्रियों को किराये वृद्धि के संबंध में जो चिंता है उस पर इस एक पंक्ति का उत्तर अत्यंत खेदजनक है । दुर्भाग्य इस बात का है जब कि समाचार पत्रों में एयर इंडिया के किराये की वृद्धि के बारे में सैकड़ों खबरें छप चुकी हैं तब सदन को केवल एक पंक्ति में उत्तर दिया जा रहा है । आज के समाचार पत्रों में एयर इंडिया के एक प्रवक्ता श्री जितेन्द्र भार्गव ने दुबई से कहा है कि दस परसेंट किराये की वृद्धि करने का प्रस्ताव है । हम अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय हवाई परिवहन संस्था का सदस्य होने के कारण न हम अकेले अपना किराया बढ़ा सकते हैं, न हमारे देश में कोई और किराया बढ़ा सकता है । सब को मिलकर बढ़ाना पड़ता है । रुपये के अवमूल्यन के बाद अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय सेवाएं हम पर यह दबाव डाल रही हैं कि हमें बढ़ोतरी की अनुमति मिले और जब बढ़ोतरी हो जायेगी तो उनको भी बढ़ोतरी करनी पड़ेगी । इस स्थिति में हम आये हैं । 15 जुलाई को अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय हवाई परिवहन संस्था की जो बैठक हुई उसमें 75 प्रतिशत देशों ने इस बढ़ोतरी के लिए मान्यता दी है जो कानून बनाने के लिए पर्याप्त है । अब इतनी सारी जानकारी होने के पश्चात् और निर्णय के बहुत निकट जाने के पश्चात् सदन को केवल इतना कहा जाये कि मामला, बिना विचार के तो विचाराधीन अच्छा है, लेकिन केवल इतना कहा जाये कि विचाराधीन है, यह पर्याप्त नहीं है । इसलिए मैं मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूं कि अगर आप किराया बढ़ाना नहीं चाहते तो आपके सामने केवल दो ही रास्ते हैं । एक तो इस संस्था से त्याग-पत्र दे दो और तब जो चाहे अपना किराया बढ़ा लो या घटा लो जैसा दुनिया की कुछ